

Special Announcement 20-04

Policy for Employees at Higher Risk for COVID-19 (3/16/2020)

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has identified certain populations as being at higher risk for serious complications from COVID-19, the disease caused by the coronavirus. These CDC-identified populations include adults age 60 and older, individuals who have chronic health conditions, such as high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, lung disease or compromised immune systems, and pregnant women. See the information on the CDC website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/index.html>

This special announcement conveys Library policy for employees who are at higher risk for serious complications from COVID-19. The goal is to provide these employees with the flexibility to make the best decision to protect their health.

1. Employees Should Telework Whenever Possible

Employees in these populations should telework whenever possible. Supervisors will work with employees to identify assignments that are appropriate for telework. Employees whose telework assignments require them to report to the Library in person periodically (e.g., to pick up materials for processing) should work with their supervisors to identify alternate ways to accomplish necessary tasks.

2. Employees Who Cannot Telework

Employees in these populations who cannot telework will, at the employee's request, be placed on paid administrative leave (excused absence). This includes employees whose regular work is not amenable to telework and teleworkers whose assignments cannot be adjusted to eliminate the need for them to report to the Library in person.

3. Voluntary Decision

The decision to identify oneself as part of the higher-risk population and to request telework or administrative leave, as appropriate, is voluntary. Employees are encouraged to make decisions that will safeguard their health without fear of negative consequences in their employment.

4. Procedures

To identify oneself as part of the higher-risk population, employees should take the following steps:

- First, contact their supervisor to inform them that they are at a higher risk for complications from COVID-19 and that they need to telework or be placed on administrative leave. Employees should **not** provide their supervisor with details about the health condition that makes them

part of the higher-risk population. Employees should work with the supervisor to identify appropriate telework assignments.

- Second, contact the Health Services Division (HSD) by email at hso@loc.gov to inform HSD that they are part of the higher-risk population. Employees may self-certify their status. Medical documentation is not necessary.

The email to HSD should provide the following information: employee's name, service unit and division, whether the employee is part of the higher risk population due to their age (60 or older) or to an underlying health condition. The employee does not need to describe their underlying health condition. Employees who do not have access to Library email may contact HSD from their personal email accounts. Employees who do not have access to email may call HSD at (202) 707-8035 to provide the necessary information.

5. Effective Date

This policy is effective Monday, March 16, 2020 and remains in effect until modified or canceled.